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The Perception of Isochrony and Phonetic Synchronisation in Dubbing

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Dubbing

- Overcoming the language barrier in cinema
- Replacing and matching of speech. In this case, interlingual dubbing
- “Imperfect art” (Chaves García, 2000: 44) and dyschrony

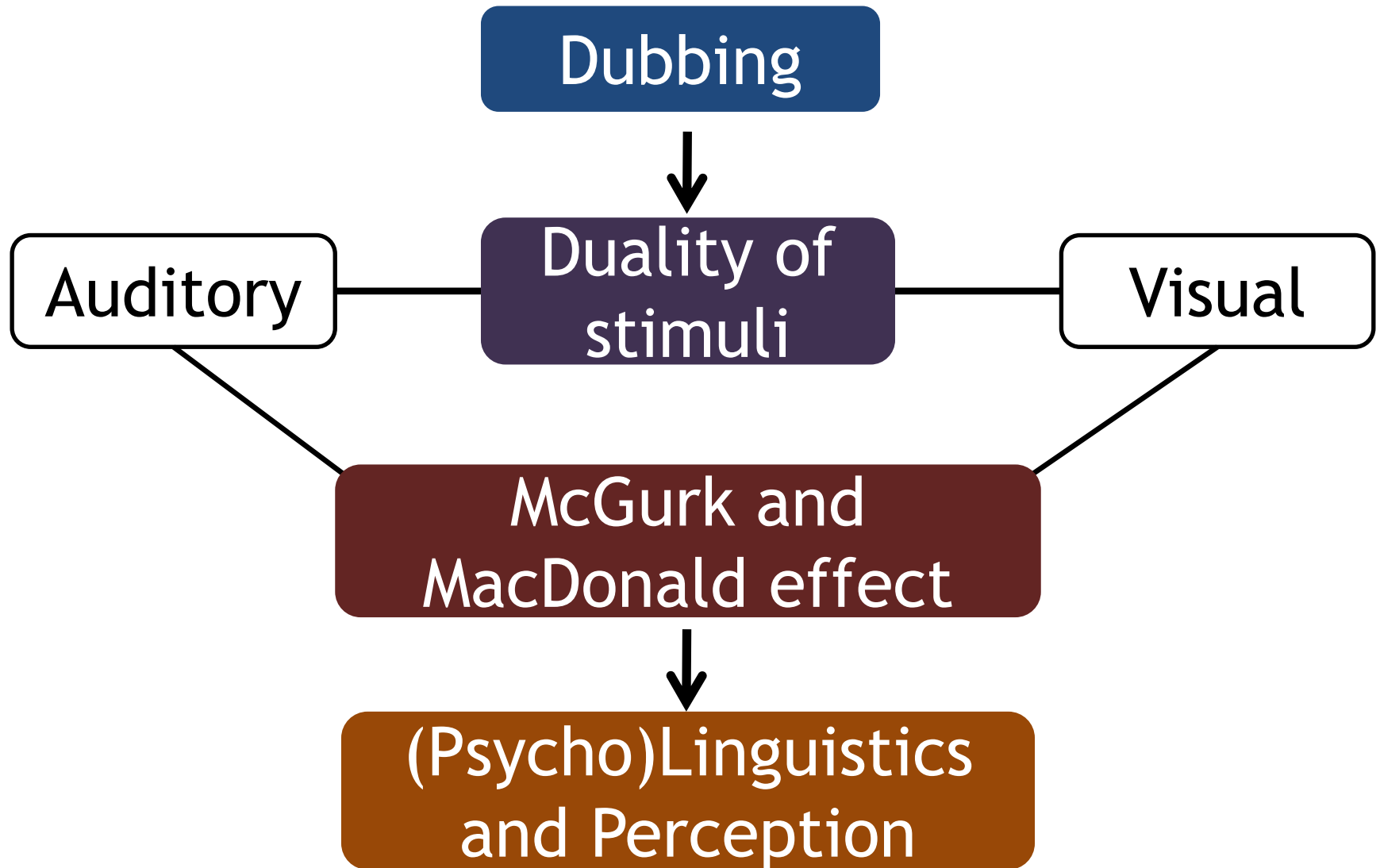
Synchronisation

- **Kinesic synchronisation**
 - Synchronisation of body movements (Fodor, 1976: 72)
- **Isochrony**
 - Synchronisation of utterances and pauses, i.e. the length of utterances (Whitman-Linsen, 1992: 22)
 - Isochrony is one of the cornerstones of dubbing (Chaume, 2007: 76) as it is the most important aspect perceived by the audience
- **Phonetic synchronisation**
 - Also referred to as lip-sync by Luyken *et al.* (1991: 73) and lip synchrony by Whitman-Linsen (1992: 20)

Nowadays practices

- Proposals on limitations in synchronisation (Fodor's theories)
 - Real praxis
 - Speaking in commercial terms, not completely applied, as it is only relevant in close ups, extreme close ups and detailed shots. (cf. Chaume, 2012; Fodor, 1976)
- Artistic experience → mélange of factors.

A psycholinguistic approach



McGurk-MacDonald Effect

- “Hearing lips and seeing voices”(McGurk & MacDonald, 1976)
- Visual syllable replaced with a different auditory syllable.
 - New (different) syllable perceived due to mismatch.
 - Visual (ga) and auditory (ba): (da)
 - Visual (ba) and auditory (ga): (bga) and (gba)
- Later studies (Colin et al., 2002; Green, 1996; Hockley and Polka, 1994) suggested that the perception of speech could depend on age (children perceive auditory information more than visual) but,
 - Can the perception dyschronies may be related to the degree of habituation to these two stimuli in dubbing?

Comparing language features

	English	Spanish	French
Fast speech tempo (Syllables/clause, syllables/second) ¹		✓	
More usual vowels		✓	✓
Syllable timed		✓	✓
Stress timed ²	✓		
Complex syllable structure ³	✓		

¹(Fenk-Oczlon & Fenk, 2010; Pellegrino et al., 2011)

²(Abercrombie, 1967; Pike, 1946; Solé Sabater, 1991)

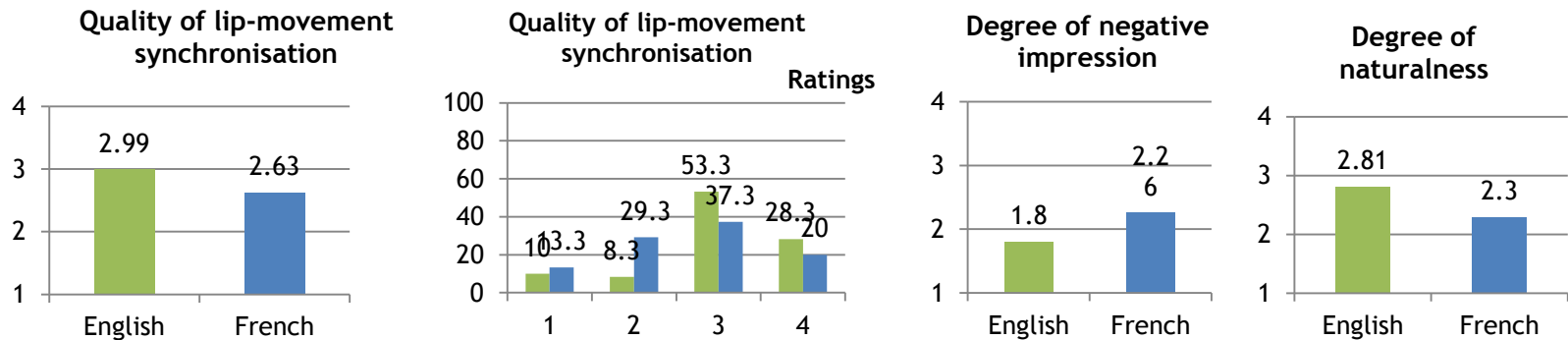
³(Delattre, 1969)

Methodology

- Nine **close-up scenes** from English and French films dubbed into Spanish
- **Spanish subjects**
- Questionnaire
 - Background information
 - Quality of **synchronisation**
 - Degree of **naturalness**
 - Identification of the **original language**

Results and discussion

- English matches better



- Identification of original language
- Linguistic competence → Presence of lip reading
- (Age difference)

Conclusion

- Spanish audience has a great acceptance and unawareness of phonetic dyschronies.(Comparative studies)
- Little negative impression.
- Other fields of analysis.
 - **Future research**
 - Combination of other languages and nationalities
 - Neurolinguistics (physical responses)
 - Open for further investigation (Language aquisition, quality purposes, pathologies...)

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